Potential impact of proposed noxious weed treatment at Bluewater Fish Hatchery (MDFWP) on plant species of special concern

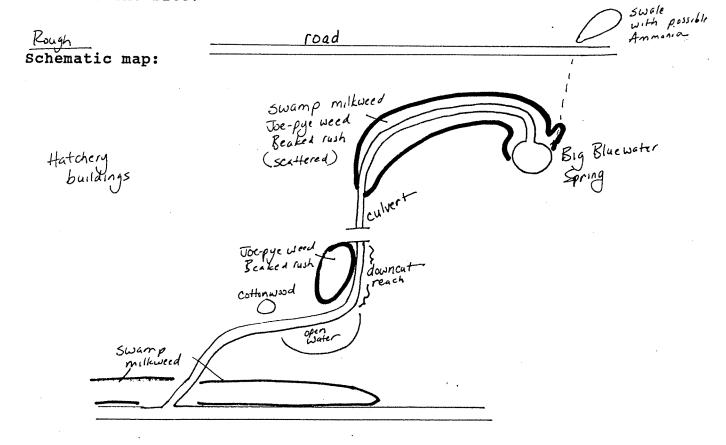
Summary: Three state plant species of special concern documented from Bluewater Fish Hatchery are Joe-pye weed (Eupatorium maculatum), swamp milkweed (Asclepias incarnata) and beaked spikerush (Eleocharis rostellata). The first two occur together in open meadow habitat adjoining Big Bluewater Spring and downstream watercourses (see schematic map, next page). They are discontinuous along this linear habitat and do not occur on diversions, slumpbanks, downcut stream reaches, or under deep shade. Swamp milkweed numbers diminish downstream and it is not present in the productive meadows and meadows invaded by Phalaris arundinaceae downstream as is Joe-pye weed. The beaked spikerush is found on saturated marl in small areas adjoining Big Bluewater Spring and is very localized in sparsely-vegetated marl margins of the immediate downstream watercourse.

Both meadow species are most numerous immediately below the spring impoundment. This is also the portion of their existing distribution with heaviest invasion of the most serious noxious weed, leafy spurge. The beaked spikerush, by contrast, is a special wetland plant and leafy spurge only encroaches at its habitat margins.

Plants have been collected and tentatively identified as scarlet ammannia (Ammannia coccinea) in pre-flowering condition. It was collected from, and may be restricted to, a small brackish swale north of Big Bluewater Spring, on the north side of the road. Leafy spurge has the potential to invade surrounding uplands, but is absent for now in this area, and the swale itself is too alkaline for leafy spurge encroachment.

All four of the above-mentioned state plant species of special concern are currently ranked "S1": critically imperiled. swamp milkweed was previously reported in Dorn (1984) from Carbon County, but we have been unable to locate specimen information, so the Bluewater Fish Hatchery population is the only record in the state where location is precisely known at present. The Joepye weed is known from a total of three records in the state, the other two located to the north and east in Big Horn County. The beaked spikerush is known from seven other locations in the state much farther west, including Flathead, Lake, Madiwon, Sanders and Teton counties (the latter is at Pine Butte Swamp). The scarlet ammannia has been collected three times previously in the state, the most recent being over 50 years ago. It was collected in Garfield and Phillips counties, and somewhere on the "Milk River" Note: The first two species might turn out to be more common if we had more information from Carbon County, but they warrant the "S1" rank for the present. They are tracked by the Wyoming Natural Heritage Program, and have been lowered in their Wyoming status based on the number of new records, and their repeated occurrence in altered habitat like road ditches.

The feasability of various noxious weed control options were not considered, but their potential impacts on the three rare plant species are briefly described. Herbicide application would threaten both meadow species which, like leafy spurge are dicots, except by hand treatment early in the growing season. Most or all potential herbicide application options for leafy spurge are ruled out by the proximity to surface water and the shallowness of the water table in the rare species' habitat. Herbicide application would not affect beaked spikerush, a monocot. grazing could impact all rare species. Most or all potential options for control by goat grazing are precluded in this habitat by its susceptibility to trampling, slumping, and further successional degradation. No threats are likely with insect biocontrol measures, and no native species of Euphorbia were found at the site.

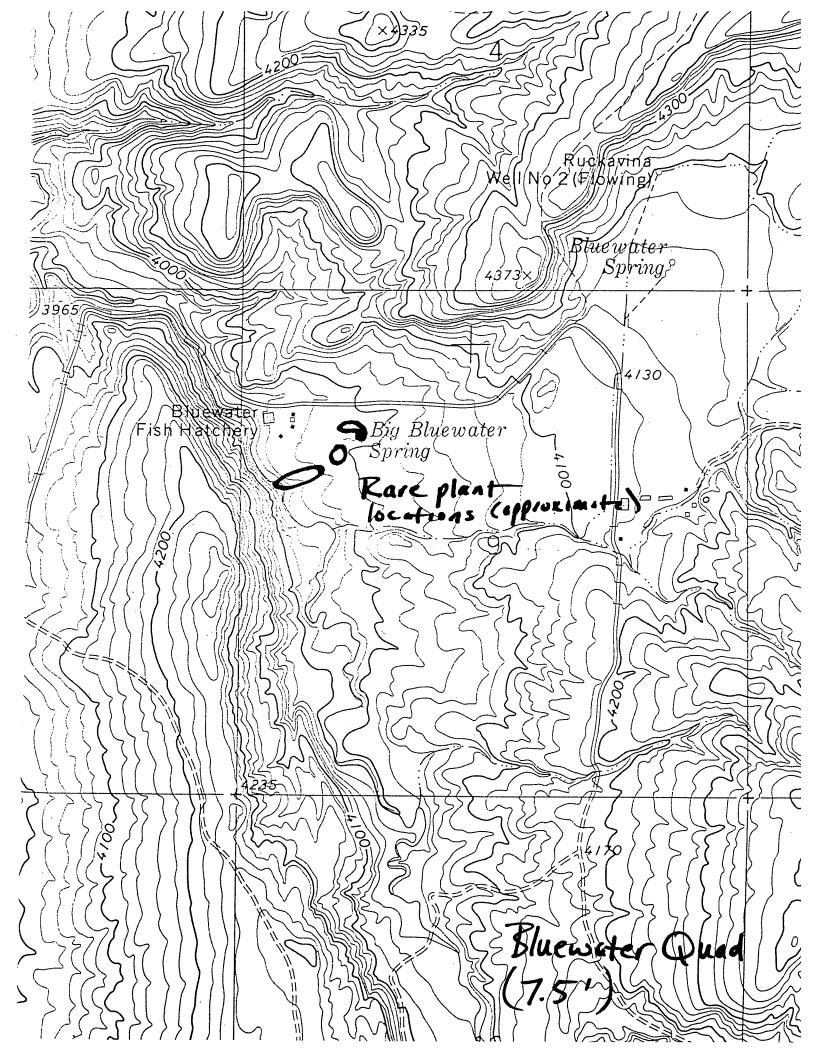


Supporting information:

Plant species of special concern survey forms for <u>Asclepias incarnata</u> and <u>Eupatorium maculatum</u>

Copy of Bluewater topo map (7.5') showing location and extent of Bluewater Fish Hatchery rare plant species

Preliminary species list



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Preliminary list of vascular plants at Bluewater Fish Hatchery*

Scientific name Agropyron dasystachum Agropyron spicatum Allium textile (Ammania coccinea) Amelanchier alnifolia Andropogon scoparius (Note: Androsace septentrionalis Apocynum sibiricum Arctium minus Arenaria nuttallii Aristida longiseta Artemisia cana Artemisia frigida Artemisia tridentata Asclepias incarnata Asclepias viridiflora Asclepias speciosa Aster (junciformis) Astragalus agrestis Astragalus bisulcatus Astragalus gilviflorus

decumbens

Astragalus missouriensis Atriplex canescens

Betula occidentalis Bouteloua gracilis Bromus inermis* Bromus tectorum* Camelina sativa*

Astragalus gracilis

Astragalus miser var.

Cardamine pensylvanica

Carex aquatilis Carex aurea Carex filifolia Carex lanuginosa

Carex spp.

Castilleja angustifolia Chaenactis douglasii Chrysothamnus nauseosus

Cirsium arvense* Cirsium flodmanii Clematis liqusticifolia Commandra umbellatum Conium maculatum*

Common name

Thickspike wheatgrass Bluebunch wheatgrass White prairie onion Scarlet ammannia

Juneberry

Little bluestem

This forms a dense sod in localized undisturbed areas

near springs, and may have once been the dominant.)

Rockjasmine Dogbane Burdock

Nuttall's sandwort

Three-awn Silver sage Fringed sage Big sage

Swamp milkweed Green milkweed Showy milkweed Rush aster

Common milkvetch Two-grooved milkvetch Tufted milkvetch Graceful milkvetch

Weedy milkvetch

Ground plum

Four-wing saltbush

Water birch Blue grama Smooth brome Cheatgrass False flax Bitter cress Water sedge Golden sedge

Thread-leaved sedge

Wooly sedge

Sedges Paintbrush Chaenactis Rabbitbrush Canada thistle Prairie thistle Western clematis Bastard toadflax Poison hemlock

* Those species whose scientific names are asterisked are exotic

Page 2

Convolvulus arvensis* Cornus stolonifera Crepis intermedia Cymopterus bipinnatus Cynoglossum officinale* Dalea candida Descurainia richardsonii* Distichilis stricta Eleagnus angustifolia* Eleocharis rostellata Eleocharis spp. Equisetum arvense Equisetum laevigatum Erigeron caespitosus Erigeron spp. Eriogonum ovalifolium Erysimum repandum Eupatorium maculatum Euphorbia esula* Galium aparine Glycyrrhiza lepidota Haplopappus armerioides Hesperis matronalis* Humulus lupulus Iva xanthifolia Juncus tracyi Juncus spp. Juniperus scopulorum Kochia scoparia* Koeleria cristata Lappula redowski* Lesquerella alpina Lewisia rediviva Lilium philadelphicum Linum perenne Lycopus (americanus) Melilotus officinalis* Mentha arvensis Mirabilis linearis Lactuca serriola Lepidium campestre* Nasturtiuim officinale Onosmodium mollis Orobanche ludoviciana Oryzopsis hymenoides Oxytropis lagopus Penstemon nitidus Phacelia linearis Phalaris australis* Parietaria pensylvanica Psoralea (tenuiflora) Poa pratensis

Bindweed Red osier dogwood Western hawkweed Cymopterus Hound's tongue White prairie clover Flixweed Saltgrass Russian olive Beaked spike rush Spike rush Horsetail Scouring rush Daisy fleabane Fleabane Oval-leaved buckwheat Wallflower Joe-pye weed Leafy spurge Cleavers Wild licorice Haplopappus Sweet rocket Hops Poverty weed Tracy's rush Rush Rocky Mountain juniper Russian thistle Junegrass Stickseed Alpine bladderpod Bitterroot Wild lily Blue flax Bugleweed Yellow sweetclover Wild mint Four-o'clock Wild lettuce Pepper grass Water cress Gromwell Broomrape Indian ricegrass Rabbitfoot locoweed Penstemon Phacelia Reed canary grass Pellitory Scurf-pea Kentucky bluegrass

Page 3

Poa secunda Sandberg's bluegrass Poa spp. Bluegrass Populus (acuminata) Lanceleaf cottonwood Potamogeton foliosus Pondweed Prunus virginiana Chokecherry Raphanus raphanastrum* Jointed charlock Rhus trilobata Skunkbush sumac Ribes aureum Golden currant Rosa woodsii Wood's rose Salix brachycarpa Short-fruited willow Salix drummondii Drummond's willow Salix exigua Sandbar willow Scirpus acutus Hardstem bullrush Scirpus americanus Three-square Senecio canus Silvery groundsel Sisymbrium altissimum* Tumble mustard Sisyrhinchium angustifolium Blue-eyed grass Smilacina stellata False starry Solomen's seal Solanum ducamara* Nightshade Solanum triflorum* Nightshade Solidago missouriensis Goldenrod Solidago mollis Soft goldenrod Solidago (occidentalis) Western goldenrod Sporobolus airoides Alkali sacaton Spartina pectinata Prairie cordgrass Sphaeralcea coccinea Scarlet globe mallow Stanleya tomentosa Hairy prince's-plume (The preceding species was recently dropped from the Montana species of special concern list. In Montana, it is found only in Carbon County, where it is relatively widespread.) Stipa comata Needle-and-thread Stipa viridula Green needlegrass Symphoricarpos occidentalis Western snowberry Tamarisk chinensis* Tamarisk Thalictrum dasycarpum Meadowrue Thlaspi arvense* Penny cress Toxocodendron rydbergii Poison ivy (Note: The extensiveness of the above is taken to indicate a history of grazing.) Typha latifolia Cattail Urtica dioica Stinging nettle Veronica anagallis-aquatica Water speedwell Vicia americana American vetch Yucca glauca Yucca Zannichellia palustris Horned pondweed (Note: The preceding is being verified. It has previously been collected in Montana only in Beaverhead County, and it is unusual to find it in running water rather than still water.) Zigadenus venenosus Death camas

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PLANT SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN SURVEY FORM

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

1515 E. 6TH AVE., HELENA, MT 59620

DATE OF SURVEY: 6 10 194 OBSERVER(S): 8. Heidel
WORK LOCATION/POSITION TITLE (Forest/District, District/Resource Area of observer(s)):
species scientific name: Eleocharis rostellata
LOCATION: (Attach a copy of pertinent 7.5' or 15' topographic map section with locations of populations/subpopulations outlined, one map for each sensitive species described)
usgs quadrangle: Bluewater county: Carbon
TOWNSHIP: 65 RANGE: $24E$ SECTION: 9 1/4 SEC.: $56''40fNW'y$
ADDITIONAL T/R/S, SECTIONS or 1/4 SECs.:
ELEVATION (at population center (and range of population if known)): 3990
NATIONAL FOREST/BLM DISTRICT: F.S. DISTRICT/ BLM RESOURCE AREA:
LAND OWNERSHIP/MANAGEMENT (If not USFS/BLM): MAFWP
FOREST STAND OR ALLOTMENT NUMBER:
DIRECTIONS TO SITE (refer to roads, trails, geographic features, etc.):
Ca. 7 mi NE of Bridger along Bluewster Creek; marked by signs
HABITAT:
VEGETATION STRUCTURE WITHIN POPULATION AREA:
TOTAL TREE COVER (%) TOTAL SHRUB COVER (%)
TOTAL FORB COVER (%) TOTAL GRAMINOID COVER (%)
TOTAL MOSS/LICHEN COVER (%) TOTAL BARE GROUND COVER (%)
ASSOCIATED PLANT COMMUNITY:(list dominant species currently present, include age structure if known):
sedge meadow
HABITAT TYPE: UNKNOWN - Carex aguatilis?
ADDITIONAL ASSOCIATED PLANT SPECIES: Carex agraphis, Carex agree, Carex langinosa,
Juncus tracy i
100FF7 (0 05 100F 04 05 10 05
ASPECT (S, SE, NNW, etc.): % SLOPE: O-Z SLOPE SHAPE (concave, convex, straight, etc.):
LIGHT EXPOSURE (open, shaded, partial shade, etc.): Ofcn
TOPOGRAPHIC POSITION (crest, upperslope, midslope, lowerslope, bottom, etc.): <u>Valley bottom</u>
MOISTURE: (dry, moist, saturated, inundated, seasonal seepage, etc.): Saturated
parent material: tufa soil texture: 311t - no soil development
GEOMORPHIC LAND FORM (e.g. glaciated mountain slopes and ridges, alpine glacial valley, rolling uplands, breaklands, alluvial-colluvial-lacustrine (floodplains, terraces etc.), rockslides)
EVIDENCE OF DISTURBANCE: Impoundment, slumping, invision of Weedy and woody species

POPULATION SIZE:
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS (or exact count, if feasible; if plants are spreading vegetatively, indicate number of
aerial stems): Over 100+; Survey incomplete and estimate likely to be very lo
NUMBER OF SUBPOPULATIONS (if applicable): Two main areas
SIZE OF AREA COVERED BY POPULATION (acres): 1011 + 1011
BIOLOGY: PHENOLOGY (percentage flowering, fruiting, vegetative): Spikelets are all immature
ANY SYMBIOTIC OR PARASITIC RELATIONSHIPS?:
EVIDENCE OF DISEASE, PREDATION OR INJURY?:
REPRODUCTIVE SUCCESS (evidence of seed dispersal and establishment):
DOCUMENTATION:
PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN? (if so, indicate photographer and repository):
SPECIMEN TAKEN? (if so, list collector, collection number, and repository): \(\frac{1/65}{100} \) Immature .
IDENTIFICATION (list name of person making determination, and/or name of flora or book used):
Hitchcock and Cronquist (1973).
ECODATA PLOT NUMBER (attach photocopied data sheets):
<u>EO RANK</u>
For the following questions: A-EXCELLENT B-GOOD C-MARGINAL D-POOR
(How representative is this occurrence? Consider the size and productivity of the population and the vitality and vigor of individuals.)
A B C D - Comments:
EO CONDITION: (Is the habitat supporting the EO pristine or degraded? Is there a potential for the habitat to recover from disturbances?)
A B C D - Comments:
EO VIABILITY: (What are the long-term prospects for the continued existence of this occurrence at the indicated leve of quality?)
A B C D - Comments:
EO DEFENSIBILITY: (Can this occurrence be protected from extrinsic human factors?)
A B C D - Comments:
EO RANK: (Summary of all factors listed above).
A/B C D - Comments:
COMMENTS:

Insufficient information to distinguish between good and marginal

PLANT SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN SURVEY FORM

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

1515 E. 6TH AVE., HELENA, MT 59620

1 10 ort
DATE OF SURVEY: 6, 10, 94 OBSERVER(S): B. Heidel
WORK LOCATION/POSITION TITLE (Forest/District, District/Resource Area of observer(s)): MTNHP
species scientific name: <u>Eupatorium maculatum</u>
LOCATION: (Attach a copy of pertinent 7.5' or 15' topographic map section with locations of populations/subpopulations outlined, one map for each sensitive species described)
usgs quadrangle: Buewater county: Carbon
TOWNSHIP: 65 RANGE: 24 E SECTION: 9 1/4 SEC.: $NW'4$
ADDITIONAL T/R/S, SECTIONS OF 1/4 SECS.:
ELEVATION (at population center (and range of population if known)): 3990
NATIONAL FOREST/BLM DISTRICT: F.S. DISTRICT/ BLM RESOURCE AREA:
LAND OWNERSHIP/MANAGEMENT (If not USFS/BLM): MDFWP
FOREST STAND OR ALLOTMENT NUMBER:
DIRECTIONS TO SITE (refer to roads, trails, geographic features, etc.):
Ca. 7 mi NE of Bridger along Bluewater Creek; marked by signs
HABITAT:
VEGETATION STRUCTURE WITHIN POPULATION AREA:
TOTAL TREE COVER (%) TOTAL SHRUB COVER (%)
TOTAL FORB COVER (%) P TOTAL GRAMINOID COVER (%) 3
TOTAL MOSS/LICHEN COVER (%) TOTAL BARE GROUND COVER (%)
ASSOCIATED PLANT COMMUNITY:(list dominant species currently present, include age structure if known):
dominated by unidentified grasses - Colomagnostis?
HABITAT TYPE:
ADDITIONAL ASSOCIATED PLANT SPECIES:
ASPECT (S, SE, NNW, etc.): % SLOPE: D-2 SLOPE SHAPE (concave, convex, straight, etc.):
LIGHT EXPOSURE (open, shaded, partial shade, etc.): open to partial shade
TOPOGRAPHIC POSITION (crest, upperslope, midslope, lowerslope, bottom, etc.): Války be Ham
MOISTURE: (dry, moist, saturated, inundated, seasonal seepage, etc.): Moist; With Saturated layer close to surface
PARENT MATERIAL: <u>tufa</u> soil texture: <u>104m - fertile, calcareous</u>
GEOMORPHIC LAND FORM (e.g. glaciated mountain slopes and ridges, alpine glacial valley, rolling uplands, breaklands, alluvial-colluvial-lacustrine (floodplains, terraces etc.), rockslides)
EVIDENCE OF DISTURBANCE: Impoundment, invasion of weedy and woody species, slumping

POPULATION SIZE:
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS (or exact count, if feasible; if plants are spreading vegetatively, indicate number of
aerial stems): Over 1000 stems; typically 2-10 stems per clump (individue
NUMBER OF SUBPOPULATIONS (if applicable): Surtable habitat is discontinuous, but there are three main greas
SIZE OF AREA COVERED BY POPULATION (acres): 1855 than 5
BIOLOGY:
PHENOLOGY (percentage flowering, fruiting, vegetative): All individuals are over a month from flowering
ANY SYMBIOTIC OR PARASITIC RELATIONSHIPS?:
EVIDENCE OF DISEASE, PREDATION OR INJURY?:
REPRODUCTIVE SUCCESS (evidence of seed dispersal and establishment): The Viriation in Stems / Clump may reflect mixed age structure
DOCUMENTATION -
PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN? (if so, indicate photographer and repository): See Vanderhorst photo
SPECIMEN TAKEN? (if so, list collector, collection number, and repository): Vanderhers (5/55)
IDENTIFICATION (list name of person making determination, and/or name of flora or book used):
Dorn (184)
ECODATA PLOT NUMBER (attach photocopied data sheets):
EO RANK
For the following questions: A-EXCELLENT B-GOOD C-MARGINAL D-POOR
EO QUALITY: (How representative is this occurrence? Consider the size and productivity of the population and the vitality and vigor of individuals.)
B C D - Comments:
EO CONDITION: (Is the habitat supporting the EO pristine or degraded? Is there a potential for the habitat to recover from disturbances?)
A (B) C D - Comments:
EO VIABILITY: (What are the long-term prospects for the continued existence of this occurrence at the indicated level of quality?)
ABCD - Comments: Habitat is invaded by leaty sparge, Canada Histle
EO DEFENSIBILITY: (Can this occurrence be protected from extrinsic human factors?)
A(B)CD - Comments:
EO RANK: (Summary of all factors listed above).
A/B)C D - Comments:
This large, vigorous population is in a setting limited by woody invasion, and invaded by weeds.
and invided by weeds.

PLANT SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN SURVEY FORM

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

1515 E. 6TH AVE., HELENA, MT 59620

DATE OF SURVEY: 6 10 194 OBSERVER(S): B. Heidel
WORK LOCATION/POSITION TITLE (Forest/District, District/Resource Area of observer(s)):
species scientific name: Asclepias incarnata
LOCATION: (Attach a copy of pertinent 7.5' or 15' topographic map section with locations of populations/subpopulations outlined, one map for each sensitive species described)
usgs quadrangle: Bluewater county: Carbon
USGS QUADRANGLE: Bluewater county: Carbon TOWNSHIP: 65 RANGE: 24 E SECTION: 9 1/4 SEC.: SW14 of NW14
ADDITIONAL T/R/S, SECTIONS or 1/4 SECs.:
ELEVATION (at population center (and range of population if known)): 3990
NATIONAL FOREST/BLM DISTRICT: F.S. DISTRICT/ BLM RESOURCE AREA:
LAND OWNERSHIP/MANAGEMENT (If not USFS/BLM): MOFWP
FOREST STAND OR ALLOTMENT NUMBER:
DIRECTIONS TO SITE (refer to roads, trails, geographic features, etc.):
Ca. 7 mi NE of Bridger along Bluewater Cr.; marked by signs
HABITAT:
VEGETATION STRUCTURE WITHIN POPULATION AREA:
TOTAL TREE COVER (%) TOTAL SHRUB COVER (%)
TOTAL FORB COVER (%) P TOTAL GRAMINOID COVER (%) 3
TOTAL MOSS/LICHEN COVER (%) TOTAL BARE GROUND COVER (%)
ASSOCIATED PLANT COMMUNITY:(list dominant species currently present, include age structure if known):
dominated by unidentified grasses - Colomographis?
HABITAT TYPE:
ADDITIONAL ASSOCIATED PLANT SPECIES:
ASPECT (S, SE, NNW, etc.): % SLOPE: O-Z SLOPE SHAPE (concave, convex, straight, etc.):
IGHT EXPOSURE (open, shaded, partial shade, etc.): Open to partial shade
ropographic position (crest, upperslope, midslope, lowerslope, bottom, etc.):
MOISTURE: (dry, moist, saturated, inundated, seasonal seepage, etc.): Moist, with shillow ground with table
PARENT MATERIAL: tufa SOIL TEXTURE: 104m - fortile calcareous
ECOMORPHIC LAND FORM (e.g. glaciated mountain slopes and ridges, alpine glacial valley, rolling uplands, breaklands,
VIDENCE OF DISTURBANCE: Impoundment invision of woody and woody species slumping
VIDENCE OF DISTURBANCE: Impoundment, invasion of weedy and woody species slumping

POPULATION SIZE:
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS (or exact count, if feasible; if plants are spreading vegetatively, indicate number of
aerial stems): Over 500 + .
NUMBER OF SUBPOPULATIONS (if applicable): One man area
SIZE OF AREA COVERED BY POPULATION (acres): 1655 than 2
BIOLOGY: PHENOLOGY (percentage flowering, fruiting, vegetative): All Infloresences are at least 3 weeks from flow
ANY SYMBIOTIC OR PARASITIC RELATIONSHIPS?:
EVIDENCE OF DISEASE, PREDATION OR INJURY?:
REPRODUCTIVE SUCCESS (evidence of seed dispersal and establishment):
DOCUMENTATION: PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN? (if so, indicate photographer and repository): No. Photo taken elsewhere (vailable.
SPECIMEN TAKEN? (if so, list collector, collection number, and repository): No. Fish Hatchery personnel
may be able to take Gilection in flower
IDENTIFICATION (list name of person making determination, and/or name of flora or book used):
ECODATA PLOT NUMBER (attach photocopied data sheets):
<u>EO RANK</u>
For the following questions: A-EXCELLENT B-GOOD C-MARGINAL D-POOR
EO QUALITY: (How representative is this occurrence? Consider the size and productivity of the population and the vitality and vigor of individuals.)
ABCD - Comments:
EO CONDITION: (Is the habitat supporting the EO pristine or degraded? Is there a potential for the habitat to recover from disturbances?)
ABCD - Comments:
EO VIABILITY: (What are the long-term prospects for the continued existence of this occurrence at the indicated level of quality?)
ABCD - Comments:
EO DEFENSIBILITY: (Can this occurrence be protected from extrinsic human factors?)
ABC D - Comments:
EO RANK: (Summary of all factors listed above).
A (B)C D - Comments:
COMMENTS:
This large population is limited in extent by woody invision.
This large population is limited in extent by woody invision, and in hibitat invided by weeds